

Jump in Enrolment Brings New Challenges

AT MAMAWI ATOSKETAN NATIVE SCHOOL (MANS) the 2015/2016 school year started with four new portable classrooms as an interim solution to an ever-increasing demand for student seats: 201 students enrolled (a 15 percent increase since last year), and we have a waiting list. As with all growth, there are some "growing pains."

Until The Bridge Campaign is completed and the new school building can be constructed, the high school will be "portable," but the classroom experience and teacher dedication are still solid.

Holly Kay, who moved into the high school section this fall from Grade 5,* demonstrates what it takes to care enough to work and model Christ in the classrooms of Canada's growing mission school.

Dear Student,

I know you are looking at me with the entire anger your body can manage. I know you are seething because I do not allow you to treat me like a verbal punching bag. Do you know why?

I do not allow you to swear at me, because I need to show you that it's OK to require people to treat you well.

I do not allow you to treat me horribly, because I need you to know what it looks like for someone to stand up for oneself, which may one day give you the courage to do the same.

I do not allow you to scream at me, because I need you to see that it's not right for a person to be treated that way.

I am not OK with your choice to ignore me, because I need u to see that it's OK to say, "I am worth listening to."

I am not OK with you walking past me when I say "Hello," because I want to show you that you have a voice and that you need to make sure it's being heard.

I am not OK with you putting your head down when I am trying to speak to you, because I need you to hear me when I say, "You need to stand up and be heard."

I know that when you disrespect me, all you see is me in your face, but I'm not just standing up for myself.

I am standing up for you.

I stand so you can see what it looks like.

I stand so you can see that those who require respect from others can be people to emulate.

I stand so I can hold your spot until you are ready to take it.

So you can try and ignore me; I will require you to hear me.

You can try and push me; I will require you to stand up.

You can try and get me out of your face; I will require you to see me.

You can try and remove me, but I'm committed to saving your spot for you.

You will not move me. Because I am standing until you learn how to.

Sincerely,

Your teacher, Ms. Kay ■

Lynn McDowell is director of Planned Giving, Alberta Conference, and campaign manager of The Bridge Campaign to build a high school building at Mamawi Atosketan Native School.



Photo: Darlene Reimche

Mamawi Atosketan Native School is the first stop for two new portables, purchased by the Alberta Conference for use around the province. Arriving in August, the portables will move on to other conference ministries when the recently launched Bridge Campaign and the high school building are completed. To receive updates on the progress of the campaign, go to www.mans1.ca/news-signup.

(Right) Students enjoy MANS's "welcome back" supper with their families.

*See the June 2015 *Messenger* for Holly's reflections on being a MANS teacher.